United Nations A/C.2/58/4

General Assembly

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Fifty-eighth session
Second Committee
Agenda item 94 (d)
Environment and sustainable development: further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Preparations for an international meeting to review the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Note by the Secretariat

By its resolution 2003/55 and decision 2003/283, the Economic and Social Council, recalling General Assembly resolution 57/262 and reiterating the provisions of decision II adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its eleventh session, in particular its paragraph 9, recommended to the Assembly that travel and subsistence allowance for participants from small island developing States to the preparatory meetings and the international meeting to undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States be provided from the funds designated by donors for that purpose in the voluntary trust fund established by the Assembly in resolution 57/262.

03-56305 (E) 161003

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Second Committee
Agenda item 95
Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Future programme, organization and methods of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development

Note by the Secretariat

By its resolution 2003/61, the Economic and Social Council, having considered the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its eleventh session, decided to invite the General Assembly to consider using the resources previously devoted to the former ad hoc intersessional working groups of the Commission on Sustainable Development to support the participation of representatives of States members of the Commission in one of their respective regional meetings in each implementation cycle. The Council also recommended to the Assembly that resources released by the termination of the work of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development, whose work had been transferred to the Commission on Sustainable Development, could be used to support the work of the Commission.

03-56314 (E) 171003

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Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Trust Fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests

Note by the Secretariat

By its resolution 2003/63, the Economic and Social Council recommended that the General Assembly decide that support to participants from developing countries, with priority to the least developed countries, as well as from countries with economies in transition, may be provided from the Trust Fund for travel and daily subsistence allowance from funds designated for that purpose.

03-56326 (E) 171003

United Nations A/C.2/58/7

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Fifty-eighth session
Item 92 of the agenda
Sectoral policy questions: preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of funds of illicit origin and returning such assets to the countries of origin

Letter dated 20 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Honduras to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request the circulation, under agenda item 92 of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, of the attached letter dated 16 October 2003 from Mr. Luis Cosenza Jiménez, Secretary of State in the Presidential Cabinet, addressed to Mr. Peter Eigen, Chairman of Transparency International (see annex).

(*Signed*) Manuel Acosta **Bonilla**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

03-57579 (E) 271003 271003

Annex to the letter dated 20 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Honduras to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Letter dated 16 October 2003 from the Secretary of State in the Presidential Cabinet of Honduras to the Chairman of Transparency International

The Government of Honduras, which since 27 January 2002 has been headed by Mr. Ricardo Maduro Joest, President of the Republic, has been taking steps to combat corruption. However, we understand that in the latest report prepared by Transparency International on perceptions of corruption in various countries, it is mentioned that according to surveys conducted in Honduras, the content of which is unknown to us, the level of corruption is perceived to be the same or worse than in previous years.

Although we do not share this perception, we do not wish to enter into sterile polemics concerning the validity of the contents of your report. Instead, we would like to request you to send a mission to advise us on other measures we could take to combat effectively, not only corruption, but also the perception of corruption. We would appreciate your advice in the difficult struggle against corruption.

In order to ensure that such a mission is duly informed when it arrives in our country, I should like to refer to some of the measures we have taken to intensify the struggle against corruption:

1. Since January 2002, we have had a new Supreme Court of Justice, whose 15 judges were selected from a list of 45 persons proposed by a nominating committee from civil society. The judges serve for a seven-year term which is renewable unless two thirds of the deputies in our National Congress decide otherwise. This makes for a much more independent and professional Supreme Court, which is therefore a powerful ally in combating corruption.

2. We have delegated a major proportion of the State procurement and contracts under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This makes the processes much more transparent and combats corruption.

3. We have engaged an international auditing firm to audit the procurement and contracting processes of the executive branch. To date, the firm has produced more than 500 audit reports, which are reviewed by an advisory council consisting of representatives of civil society, the donor community and the Government. The reports are then sent to the High Court of Audit, so that it can take the measures that are legally appropriate.

4. We have established a new High Court of Audit, headed by three judges who serve for a seven-year term. Their term exceeds the presidential term, which makes them much more independent than before, so that they are much better able to safeguard public resources and ensure that public officials fulfil their duties conscientiously.

5. We have taken unprecedented steps to combat tax fraud. The revenue department has closed more than 800 businesses for not collecting sales tax as required by law.

6. We sent the proposed general budget to the National Congress in good time to allow full consideration prior to its approval. After that — for the first time in our history — we submitted the quarterly accounts required under our Constitution.

7. The Supreme Court of Justice abolished the practice of allowing judges in judicial auctions to select the lawyers to conduct the process in order to formalize the auction. Now, the company or individual carrying out the auction selects the lawyers, which has eliminated another source of corruption.

8. We have supported by every means at our disposal the work of the national anti-corruption council, which was established specifically to support the struggle against corruption.

We are convinced that the measures we have adopted have led to a reduction of corruption, but we understand that it is always possible to improve on what we have already done. For that reason, we now turn to you, in the hope that your knowledge of the topic and of the successful practices adopted by other countries will enable you to help us in this matter.

We await your reply, and meanwhile pledge our full cooperation in making your visit a success.

(*Signed*) Luis Cosenza **Jiménez**
Secretary of State
Presidential Cabinet

United Nations A/C.2/58/8

General Assembly

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Fifty-eighth session
Agenda items 94 (g) and 95

Environment and sustainable development: sustainable mountain development

Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Letter dated 17 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the conclusions of the First Global Meeting of Members of the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions, that was held in Merano, Italy, on 5 and 6 October 2003 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 94 (g) and 95.

(*Signed*) Marcello **Spatafora**
Permanent Representative

03-57453 (E) 241003

Annex to the letter dated 17 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

First Global Meeting of Members of the Mountain Partnership
Merano (Italy), October 5-6, 2003

Conclusions

The Members of the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions (thereafter referred to as the Mountain Partnership, MP) met, at the invitation of the Italian Government, for their First Global Meeting in Merano, Italy, October 5-6, 2003.

In the course of their exchanges of views, the participants recalled:

- the fundamental importance of Chapter 13 of Agenda 21 "Managing Fragile Ecosystems – Sustainable Mountain Development", adopted by the Earth Summit (Rio de Janeiro, 1992);
- the UNGA Resolutions relevant to the International Year of Mountains 2002, i.e. 53/24 of November 10, 1998, 55/189 of December 20, 2000 and 57/245 of January 30, 2003;
- the Bishkek Global Mountain Platform of November 1, 2002;
- the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002), and in particular its Paragraph 42 addressing sustainable mountain development;
- the Basic Concept Document of the Mountain Partnership ('Bali Document'), which defines the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions;
- the CSD 11 Decision, in particular paragraphs 22-24 on partnerships;
- the Report of the Secretary General of the UN prepared for the 58th United Nations General Assembly, describing achievements made at the national, regional and international level in the framework of the International Year of Mountains 2002;
- the Mountain Partnership Guiding Principles prepared by the task-force in preparation for the Merano Conference;

The participants confirmed their commitment to the Partnership and their willingness to promote its innovative, transparent, flexible, participatory and dynamic characters; the participants will thus pursue the objective of fostering actions at all levels to protect mountain environments and support mountain livelihoods through the integration of the environmental, economic and social components of sustainable mountain development.

The meeting reconfirmed that the Mountain Partnership is open to all governments, including local and regional authorities, as well as intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations whose objectives and activities are consistent with the vision and mission of the Mountain Partnership and who fulfill the criteria for membership;

The participants noted that the nature of the Mountain Partnership as an umbrella alliance does not require a complex governance mechanism;

The meeting recalled the need for a common and easily accessible secretariat to provide services to the members, essentially to help them to network, to provide them with knowledge management support and to assist them as a broker in view of facilitating the development and the funding of initiatives, following principles of cost-efficiency, solidarity and equity. In this context, the participants welcomed the offer of the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to host the secretariat, as well as the offer of the Mountain Forum to provide communication and networking services.

The participants also underlined the need to adequately integrate environmental concerns in the work and activities of the Partnership, and the catalytic role UNEP can play in this regard.

The meeting noted that, while its primary institutional relations are with the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, the Mountain Partnership is aimed to act in synergy with a variety of stakeholder groups, including civil society, regional and other Multilateral Organizations having a specific mandate in the area of the sustainable development of mountain regions and to forge linkages with existing multilateral and other relevant instruments, also to avoid duplication of existing activities.

The participants decided to continue the process of implementation of the Partnership in full compliance with the CSD XI decision, and to this end:

- To mandate the existing open-ended Task Force established to prepare the Merano meeting to continue its work towards the complete establishment of the Partnership, and to report to the members by the next meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development; the Task Force should focus on the following areas:
    - To define criteria for membership in the Mountain Partnership and responsibilities of members;
    - To examine the issue of the future governance of the Mountain Partnership, based on principles, such as democratic participation of all members, responsibility and solidarity, transparency and accountability, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency;
    - To define ways to allow the Mountain Partnership to function as a promoter for joint initiatives based on paragraph 42 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, facilitating contacts between countries and institutions in view of joint activities and creating conditions for cooperation and resource mobilization at national, regional and global level;
- To invite all members to submit their views to the Task Force in this regard.
- To foster consultation among all members, essentially by means of e-contacts and, when necessary face-to-face meetings.
- To review by the end of 2004 the structure and organization of the secretariat in a longer term perspective.

A full report of the Meeting will be produced and made available to all members of the Mountain Partnership.

The Meeting also invited all member countries of the Mountain Partnership to strive to get a resolution on sustainable mountain development adopted by the 58th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The participants agreed to arrange an action-oriented meeting of the Partnership in conjunction with the upcoming 12th session of the Commission of Sustainable Development.

The members also agreed to hold the second global meeting of the Mountain Partnership during the second semester 2004, and welcomed in this context the offer of the government of Peru to host this meeting.

The Members of the Partnership express their appreciation to the Italian and Swiss Governments, to the Mountain Forum and FAO for their efforts in preparing the meeting and the gratitude to the Italian Government and the local authorities of Bolzano, Merano and Verona for their hospitality.

United Nations A/C.2/58/9

General Assembly

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23 October 2003
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Fifty-eighth session
Second Committee
Agenda item 91 (a)
Macroeconomic policy questions: international trade and development

Note verbale dated 13 October 2003 from the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the General Assembly and has the honour to transmit herewith, for circulation to the Second Committee, the communiqué issued in Buenos Aires on 10 October 2003 on the occasion of the meeting to evaluate the outcome of the conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) held in Cancún, Mexico (see annex).

03-57721 (E) 281003 291003

Annex to the note verbale dated 13 October 2003 from the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Declaration

The Ministers and Representatives of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Egypt, India, Mexico, Paraguay, South Africa and Venezuela met in Buenos Aires to examine the perspectives of trade negotiations after the Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference held in Cancún, with a view to the meeting that will take place in Geneva no later than 15 December 2003.

We reaffirm the importance of the full functioning of the multilateral trading system and of WTO. The organization — which has almost universal membership — must continue to work on the basis of consensus and of respect for the rights of all its members.

We agree that the multilateral trading system is essential in order to continue with the trade liberalization process on a fair and equitable basis. The goal of such a process should be the growth of developing countries through the enhancement of their participation in world trade.

Development is the fundamental issue in the Doha Round and agriculture is at the centre of the negotiations. We are determined to complete the reform process and to fully integrate agriculture into the WTO disciplines.

In spite of the efforts made by the WTO members at the Ministerial Conference in Cancún, it was not possible to make substantial progress in the negotiations. We urge members to participate in a constructive manner in the discussion of all the issues of the Doha Agenda, and we stress the importance of focusing on priority issues for improving the living standards of developing and least developed countries.

We call upon all members to resume the work in Geneva in a constructive spirit, based on the positive developments at Cancún; to support the efforts by the President of the General Council and by the Director General in that regard, and to foster convergence towards a fair and generally acceptable outcome. In this respect, we commit ourselves to personally engage insofar as this contributes to facilitate the negotiations in Geneva.

Buenos Aires, 10 October 2003

United Nations A/C.2/58/10

General Assembly

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24 October 2003

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Fifty-eighth session
Agenda items 94 (a) and 95

Environment and sustainable development: promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including the implementation of the World Solar Programme 1996-2005

Implementation of agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Letter dated 16 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you, on behalf of the European Union, the joint declaration entitled "The way forward on renewable energy" (see annex). The declaration, launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development by the European Union and like-minded countries, known as the Johannesburg Renewable Energy Coalition (see the information sheet on their activities in annex), has received increased attention and support.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 94 (a) and 95.

(*Signed*) Marcello **Spatafora**
Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations

03-57944 (E) 281003

Annex to the letter dated 16 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

THE EUROPEAN UNION, BULGARIA, CYPRUS, CZECH REPUBLIC, ESTONIA, HUNGARY, ICELAND, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, MALTA, NEW ZEALAND, NORWAY, POLAND, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, THE ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES, SWITZERLAND and TURKEY

"THE WAY FORWARD ON RENEWABLE ENERGY"

1. We express our strong commitment to the promotion of renewable energy and to the increase of the share of renewable energy sources in the global total primary energy supply. We fully endorse the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, considering it a good basis for further international co-operation, and intend to go beyond the agreement reached in the area of renewable energy.

2. Increasing the use of renewable energy is an essential element to achieve sustainable development at national and global level. Renewable energy can provide important new ways to reduce pollution, diversify and secure energy supply and help provide access to energy in support of poverty eradication. Furthermore, the burning of fossil fuels is the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions and these emissions need to be reduced to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to prevent dangerous climate change.

3. We commit ourselves to co-operate in the further development and promotion of renewable energy technologies. Recognising the sense of urgency as expressed in paragraph 19(e) of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, we will work together to substantially increase the global share of renewable energy sources, with regular review of progress, on the basis of clear and ambitious time bound targets set at the national, regional and hopefully at the global level.

4. We have adopted, or will adopt, such targets for the increase of renewable energy and we encourage others to do likewise. We are convinced that this will help to implement the necessary policies to deliver a substantial increase in the global share of renewable energy sources. Such targets are important tools to guide investment and develop the market for renewable energy technologies.

5. We commit ourselves to working with others to achieve this goal, especially through the partnership initiatives being taken which could contribute to expanding the use of renewable energy, as well as forthcoming international conferences on renewable energy.

Information sheet

1. Introduction

Paragraph 19 (e) of the WSSD Plan of Implementation states that there is a need to "... with a sense of urgency, substantially increase the global share of renewable energy sources with the objective of increasing its contribution to total energy supply". Whilst "recognizing the role of national and voluntary regional targets as well as initiatives, where they exist" these conclusions (adopted on September 4, 2002) stopped short of setting targets and timetables for renewable energy.

Therefore, the European Community and its member states -- being strong advocates of renewable energies and having experienced significant benefits from the setting of targets and timetables, launched the "coalition of the like-minded countries on the way forward on Renewable Energies".

2. Members

As of June 4, 2003, 82 countries have confirmed membership of the Coalition and more are expected to do so in the near future.

There were 66 founding members (see header in annex for full list). In addition to the EU15, the initiative was co-sponsored by 51 countries including all EU Candidate Countries[1], Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, New Zealand, and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)[2]. Four countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uganda) supported the initiative from the floor at the WSSD and have later confirmed their position, bringing the total of "founding" members to 70. Since the launch in September 2002, nine more countries confirmed their participation, i.e. Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Serbia and Montenegro, Israel, the Philippines, and Singapore[1]. Four new countries joined during the 1st International Conference (Brussels, June 4th, 2003); i.e. Botswana Colombia, South-Africa, and The Gambia.

3. Objectives

The Members are committed to implementing and even going beyond the commitments stated in paragraph 19 of the WSSD plan of implementation, by closely co-operating on the basis of ambitious and time-bound targets.

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[1] Malta, Cyprus and Singapore as well as subscribing individually to the Joint Declaration are also members of AOSIS and this is taken into account in calculating the number of countries.

[2] AOSIS includes 36 countries in

- the Pacific Ocean [12]: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Western Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu;
- in the Caribbean [14]: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago;
- in the Atlantic Ocean [3]: Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and Sao Tome and Principe;
- in the Indian Ocean [4]: Comoros, Maldives, Mauritius, and the Seychelles;
- in the Mediterranean [2]: Cyprus, and Malta; and
- in the South China Sea [1]: Singapore.

AOSIS observers include American Samoa, Guam, the Netherlands Antilles, Niue, and the U.S. Virgin Islands [5].
Together they represent one fifth of the total membership of the United Nations.

Targets and timetables can help countries to implement policies to guide investments and develop markets for renewable energy technologies and services with the aim of substantially increasing the global share of renewable energy sources[3].

The EU supports the adoption of targets and time-bound tables based on a bottom-up approach and is developing its proposals for an international strategy and action plan on this basis.

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[3] The Coalition initiative is additional to the EU Energy Initiative and other EU sponsored type II energy initiatives such as REEP and MEDREP.